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ABSTRACT

Professional child care is a comprehensive service to children and families that supplements the care children receive from their families. Need for such care will vary quantitatively as a function of demographic characteristics of the family. Child care programs can and do vary in quality, but all must foster the development of the whole child. Differences in types of services needed by children from different family settings are more a matter of degree than kind. Criteria for quality child care have been developed with the participation of the membership of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC); these criteria will grow and be modified as experience with the accreditation process is gained. It can be stated with confidence that professional child care need not have negative cognitive or socioemotional consequences for children. However, the field needs formative evaluations to guide programs and summative evaluations to educate the public about the contribution the profession makes to the quality of life for children and families in America. Three additional goals of NAEYC are to build better linkages between the child care subsystem and other human service programs, to identify uniquely positive experiences that could be associated with child care, and to make a major commitment to study both the processes and products of child care programs. (RH)

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WHAT IS QUALITY CHILD CARE?

Bettye M. Caldwell¹

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The themes of our conferences for the two years of my NAEYC presidency - "How can We Educate the American Public About the Child Care Profession?" and "What is Quality Child Care?" are topics that have been at the core of my concerns for our field for almost 20 years. Accordingly, in my presentation, I am going to take you through something of a 20 year personal odyssey and a two year organizational odyssey. During this time I have written and spoken repeatedly to affiliate groups, to international groups, to related organizations, to elected officials, and to just about anyone who will listen to my ideas on these subjects.

In preparation for this presentation, which is to some extent my swan song as president of NAEYC, I did something that perhaps I do all too seldom - I looked at some of my old articles hoping to find some good ideas that I might want to share today. In doing so, I found the first article I had ever published in Young Children, noting with a sigh that it had been published as long ago as 1967. Now my own self concept is that I have developed tremendously during those intervening years. Yet I noted with some surprise that my "preachments" over the years had not changed as much as I would have thought. That is, in that little article entitled, "On Reformulating the Concept of Early Childhood Education: Some Whys Needing Wherefores" (Caldwell, 1967) I expressed my concern that we were confusing the public by calling ourselves so many different names and resisting the task of working out a common nomenclature. I also expressed the conviction that we were seen by other branches of education as

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somehow anti-intellectual and resistant to new ideas and innovation and that we would benefit from a more favorable attitude toward evaluation than we had historically shown. But perhaps the most perceptive point I made in that article was that we were hurting ourselves by failing to recognize that early education and child care were really one and the same service.

Please do not get the idea that I am claiming to be the only person concerned with these contemporary issues so many years ago, for most of you were also concerned with them at that time, if indeed you were working in the field. In fact, I suppose I could be somewhat chagrined that my own thinking has not progressed all that much in 15 years! I cite this little historical fact merely to give me a chance to relate some of the exciting actions that have been taken by NAEYC during the past few years and to have us all take pleasure in the advances made by the field as a whole during the past 20 years. Essentially all of those concerns tentatively identified by a fledgling worker in the field who was trying to get herself established some years ago relate to the need for more effective public education about early childhood development both internally in organizations such as NAEYC and externally with other professional groups and with the general public. At the business meeting this year you learned that our Ad Hoc Task Group on Nomenclature Salaries, Benefits, and Status has taken an important first step - getting membership input - in fostering the adoption of more uniform nomenclature both within the profession and in personnel departments in state classification systems throughout the country. Arriving at some sort of consensus ourselves about what we want to be called will surely help educate the general public about who we are and what we do. Also, in a major organizational growth spurt, the NAEYC Governing Board, responding to urgings from many affiliate group leaders, has voted to create a Department of Public Information (with the final title of the Department not yet

settled) as one of the major divisions within NAEYC. Furthermore, we are working to develop a proposal which will be submitted to a major private foundation for the establishment of a Child Care Information Service, which will be a key component of this new Department. Incidentally, the new Department will be in the planning stage for the next year, and we want to hear from every member of the organization about the kinds of services it should perform and get your ideas about how it can work symbiotically with its counterparts in local and state affiliate groups. All these actions clearly represent progress made at the national level toward educating the general public - and toward educating ourselves - about child care.

WHAT IS QUALITY CHILD CARE?

Now I want to turn more directly to my assignment for this address, which was to have you think collectively with me about the topic of our Conference - What is Quality Child Care? In formulating my own answer, I am going to deal with the question in reverse order. That is, I am going to ask first, what is child care? Then I'm going to raise the question of what is quality? Next I shall ask, what is? and then finally, simply, what?

What is Child Care?

I wish I could claim as much perspicacity and far-sightedness for my own grasp of the concept of child care as I implicitly did in citing evidence that I had for years been concerned about the topics of our meetings of the last two years. Actually, during those same 15 years, I have given many speeches in which I criticized professionals in the field and the general public for their inadequate concept of child care. At the same time, I have done little to discipline my own thinking on the subject. All too frequently I have stressed what child care (or day care, as I probably called it) was not. For example,

I have denounced definitions which stressed the "care and protection" role of day care, the terms frequently used in early definitions of the service. Also I have upbraided verbal descriptions of service boundaries as being for "families with some type of social pathology." And, perhaps more often than anything else, I have said to colleagues in early education who seemed to need to make a distinction between the socially accepted field of early childhood education and the less acceptable service called day care, "You don't define a service by the number of hours per day that it operates."

You will immediately notice that what is missing in those statements is any sort of positive statement about what child care is; all of those refinements of the concept pertain to what it is not. And we cannot define a field in a way that will be understood by the general public--or ourselves--if we content ourselves with specifying what it is not.

So now I want to attempt to do something that has taken me a long time to do in a way that leaves me feeling at all satisfied. The next few paragraphs of my talk pertain to what I called earlier a 20-year personal odyssey, for they have taken me 20 years to write. It will probably take me the next 20 to refine them, with your help. I hope you will listen carefully and see whether you agree with me. And every single word is important. As it is difficult to follow something that closely when it is presented verbally, I am going to give you an advance alert for some words to listen for: professional child care, comprehensive, subsystem, child rearing system, supplement, vary quantitatively, quality, growth-fostering environment, continuum. Now let me put those (and other) words in sentences in what I hope is a cogent and reasonably succinct answer to the question, What is child care?

Professional child care is a comprehensive service to children and families which supplements the care children receive from their families.

As a supplement to family care, professional child care is in no way a substitute for such care nor a competitor for the role of parents in the upbringing of their children. To some extent, professional child care represents a version of the extended family, one which is compatible with and adapted to the social realities of the modern world. Virtually all children are reared primarily in their own homes by their own families, and virtually all children receive some degree of supplemental care from persons other than their parents.

The need for professional child care will vary quantitatively as a function of demographic characteristics of the family. Families in which the primary caregiver works outside the home as well as inside because of economic need or choice, or families in which there is only one parent to provide care, or families in which the major caregiver has a disability which interferes with the ability to coordinate the rearing of the children in that setting will all need relatively more supplementary--i.e., professional--care. Families with two parents involved in the care of the children and with clear role differentiation relative to producing income and services for the family may need and utilize the professional child care system only intermittently or occasionally. Nonetheless, rare indeed would be the family that never needed or used the system.

Professional child care programs can and do vary in quality, just as family experiences can and do vary in quality. Quality will vary as a function of the characteristics and training of the people who provide the service, the physical setting in which it is provided, and the support for such services provided by the society at large. Regardless of whether families need to participate in the

child care subsystem to a small or large extent, all families need and are entitled to services of high quality. It is possible to identify those factors associated with quality and advocate for their availability and the removal or improvement of services which do not possess attributes of quality.

Just as the child rearing system must be concerned with all aspects of a child's development, so must any service which is part of that system deal with the whole child. Thus professional child care must foster the development of the child physically, intellectually, and socioemotionally. Such services must have as an overall goal the creation of a growth-fostering environment for young children. In this task there must be close coordination with the children's parents in terms of developmental goals and strategies by which these goals are achieved and a clear recognition by child care professionals that a service of high quality will meet the needs of the parents who have chosen or accepted the service as well as the children who receive it. Input from representatives of all disciplines concerned with child development is essential if comprehensive programs representing high quality in all components of the service are to be available.

Differences in types of services needed by children from different family settings are more a matter of degree than kind. Those who design and provide professional child care services have a responsibility of providing a continuum of high quality services that will appropriately match the needs of children and their families.

There you have my 20-year answer to the question, what is child care. In previous years I have come close to such a formulation many times, but once I

switched my own usage from "day care" to "child care" I had certain difficulties, as the term "child care" is perhaps but another term for child-rearing. And here is where the NAEYC program themes helped me. By inserting the adjective "professional" in front of "child care," I got away from awkward terms like "extra-family child care." And professional is precisely what we are-- and how we should be recognized and accepted by the general public. I hope that the major components of this definition will gain acceptance within the field and that we will all increase our usage of the key concepts to the point where every citizen can, if asked, answer the question, "What Is Child Care?"

What Is Quality?

And now I am ready to move to the second question extracted from my title. Assuming that, when we speak about child care, we are talking about something close to what I have just formulated, what do we mean when we refer to quality child care?

Here I do not need to say very much. The work done by NAEYC during the past two years to define quality, to encourage our members to think about what we mean when we refer to "quality programs," is nothing less than awesome. If you have followed the items in The Affiliate, the articles in Young Children--CAP 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5--you know of the thoughtful way in which criteria for quality have been painstakingly derived and displayed for all to see. Probably never in history has a definition of quality been so consensually derived. It would be difficult to come up with a figure that accurately represents the extent of input from our membership into the development of the "Criteria for High Quality Early Childhood Programs." Some 500 members devoted a substantial amount of time to critiquing the Criteria, making important and major suggestions for clarification and revision. In discussions held at various state and local affiliate groups, at least another 5,000 persons have listened,

responded, and made suggestions. Thus I am willing to state that these Criteria--the formal externalized descriptors through which a profession chooses to identify itself to its clients and to the general public--have had more input from the personnel who will be most affected by them than any such set of criteria ever derived by a professional group attempting to define quality.

Sometimes it is difficult to force yourself to put in writing your own standards for excellence. When cast in black and white, they might not sound as powerful as you think they are. If you formulate a criterion such as, "Staff speak with children in a friendly, positive, courteous manner," you fully appreciate its importance. However, someone outside the profession might scoff at such a humble descriptor of quality. But does not every field have the same problem? Are not physicians likely to feel embarrassed when they speak of the importance of the doctor-patient relationship and worry about how they can objectify it. And artists privately squirm in discomfort when they write something like, "The essence of art is the expression of a totally individualized emotional experience," knowing that the uninitiated are sure to be unable to understand such a definition, much less accept it.

We have taken a crucial first step in answering the question, "What is quality?" We have said that it encompasses at least 10 areas: the physical environment, health and safety, nutrition and food service, administration, staff qualifications and development, staff-parent interaction, staff-child interaction, child-child interaction, curriculum, and evaluation. If anyone wishes to challenge these operational statements of quality, at least there is a base line from which to make changes. And hopefully we ourselves do not feel that these are cast in concrete forever more, never to change or be modified as we undertake the task of applying them to existing programs. Just as living organisms grow, so do creative concepts and the structures through which

they are applied to organizations and individuals grow. The concepts of quality child care that NAEYC has formulated will also grow and be modified as we gain experience in the accreditation process. But it is clearly to the credit of the organization that we have said that quality can be defined, can be discovered, and can be publicly recognized.

What Is?

One of the most difficult questions to answer about child care is the shorter one, What Is? What is the field really like now? Just how professional is it? What kind of care do children receive in professional child care settings? Where, indeed, do they get such care?

Whenever anyone asks us for data about the demographics of child care, we can generally come up with only very rough estimates. We cite estimates that approximately 70% of the children receiving supplementary care are in some sort of family day care arrangement (Sager, 1974). And we can account for approximately 1,000,000 licensed positions for children in care (Lansburgh, 1984) but claim that there are at least ten times that many children in care "somewhere out there."

When people ask what happens to those children in care, we again hear all sorts of unsubstantiated opinions about the quality of existing programs. When day care research, based on presumably exemplary programs, began to show no negative consequences associated with early day care experience (see Caldwell and Freyer, 1982), many critics would claim that such data meant nothing because the bulk of child care programs were of poor quality. But do we really know that? If so, how do we know it? If it is true--and it may be true--it is known to us through an underground of information. We know it through horror stories published in newspapers of a center in which a child was observed eating off a garbage can lid, or of a family day home in which a child was

smothered by a caregiver who sat on him as discipline. And, to be sure, those things have happened. But my point is, we have absolutely no data to give us any sort of idea as to how frequent such occurrences are in the universe of events which comprise the world of professional child care. It is no credit to us that we do not have such information.

We actually have at this point in our history a fairly impressive array of evidence (Belsky and Steinberg, 1978; Rutter, 1982; Caldwell and Freyer, 1983) to allow us to say to parents who need and wish to use our services and to opponents who do not seem to understand or appreciate them that professional child care need not have negative cognitive or socioemotional consequences. It does not weaken the attachment of young children to their mothers; it does not weaken families (although it is indeed utilized to a greater extent by families already weakened by stresses in our society); it does not stunt the intellectual growth of children or retard their language development. But notice that I am saying "it," as though professional child care were a unitary, decidedly homogeneous field of service. And, to be sure, it may be; but it is to our everlasting discredit that we do not know whether it is or not. The best guess is that it is extremely heterogeneous--which is one reason we want to be able to recognize and publicly identify quality through the CAP--but we do not know that. As the field has grown up without an obligation to evaluate its impact on children and families, it has largely bypassed this function. And because of this lack of evidence we have suffered.

The field of early childhood has profited more from the recently published studies of long-term follow-ups of disadvantaged children who participated in some of the creative early childhood programs during the early sixties than it has from any and all other research done in the field in the past 20 years (see Lazar and Darlington, 1982; Schweinhart and Weikart, 1980). Incidentally, few

of those programs operated as full-day programs or ran continuously during winter and summer, but the fallout on the field of professional child care has been extensive and favorable.

We will profit even more when the field develops a positive attitude toward evaluation and begins to collect the kind of information needed to convince families and policy-makers of the value of our services. I am delighted that our NAEYC criteria for quality include evaluation and that the members who critiqued the criteria supported the importance of this category. We need not be afraid to collect the kind of information that will allow us to prove our merit to the general public. If we do not collect it, we will continue to be the victims of a bad press, of irresponsible statements about what does and does not happen in child care programs. If we do collect it, we can use the information formatively to guide our own programs and summatively to educate the public about the contribution this field makes to the quality of life for children and families in America. We must begin to help supply the answer to the question, What Is?

What?

And now I am ready for the first part of our question--simply the question, what? Specifically, what can and should we do about all this? What can NAEYC as an organization do, in addition to those things that we are already doing? Since I indicated in my opening remarks that this was something of a continuation of my last year's presidential address, I want to build upon some of the points I made at that time. Last year (Caldwell, 1983) I gave the organization five charges which I thought would help us educate the American public about the profession of child care. As my recommendations this year build upon those, I want to repeat them very briefly and then move forward. First I suggested that we needed to achieve better conceptual clarity about who and what we were and what we did--that is, we needed to work to improve our own self-concept.

Our Ad Hoc Task Group on Nomenclature, Salaries, Benefits, and Status has begun work on this most important task. Second, I suggested that we had to take a stand for quality. And that the organization has done most impressively. Third, I suggested that we needed to recruit support from the business world to improve our management skills and to give us much-needed community support for our activities. Fourth, we need to launch our own media campaign to help us counteract the consistently bad press that we seem to get. Eventually our Public Information Department will do that. And fifth and last, I urged us all to become more active, to learn how to be better and more effective advocates for the child care field. This year I am going to add three others, which will give me a total of eight for two years.

1. We need to build better linkages between the child care subsystem and other human service programs. Professional child care has grown up essentially between the cracks of other human service fields. For years the field was claimed only by social service--perhaps because no one else wanted it. This early sponsorship (if not ownership) meant that families utilizing such services were identified as having some kind and degree of pathology. But just because the field of early childhood has now staked an effective claim on child care, we should not break our connections with the field of social service. And there are other linkages that need to be strengthened. The field has always had a comfortable alliance with pediatrics, but we need more pediatricians to be advocates for the field and to be members of this organization. Those of us who now comfortably operate group infant programs need always to remember that this would not have been possible without dramatic advances in immunology and health care. Trouble can strike if we do not nourish this linkage.

Also we need to overcome our fear of the business world--and our phobia associated with profit. Some of the opinion-shapers in the field have tended to stereotype forprofit child care, assuming that only people who do not care about children's

needs would be willing to make a profit off of a service to them. My position on this issue has always been that everyone who offers a quality service should profit from such service; sometimes the only difference between a non-profit and a for-profit program is whether the director of a program is guaranteed a salary by a supportive board or whether she or he gets one only if there is anything left over after all other expenses are covered. The umbrella of quality that NAEYC develops should be broad enough to cover profit programs as well as all other kinds.

But one of our biggest challenges in terms of linkages and alliances is to make our peace with the public schools in this country. If you think child care is under seige by the general public, just reflect on what the field of public education is experiencing today! Yet, even with an awareness of the problems faced by our system of public education, I am an advocate of establishing meaningful linkages with the schools. Many of you know that for almost ten years I directed an exciting project in Little Rock--the Kramer Project--in which we operated a quality early childhood program in a public school (Caldwell, 1972). Enrollment extended from six months to 12 years of age, and the school was open year round (instead of on the anachronistic agricultural-age September to June schedule still followed in most communities) from 6:45 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Thus it was an "extended day" school. The early childhood program at Kramer did not suffer because of its proximity to and coordination with an elementary school. Furthermore, the elementary teachers modified some of their attitudes and ideas about teaching young children as a function of being part of such a program. Parents loved the service in a way that is difficult to describe. Imagine, if you will, the convenience of having all of your children young enough to need continuous supervision in the same school. One by-product of Kramer is the fact that now every primary (grades 1-3) school in

Little Rock provides before- and after-school care. I would like to think that this came about because of the example set by Kramer, but I know that instead it is because the private schools in Little Rock, mushrooming year after year into a major threat to the public schools, offer this pattern of service. But, whatever the reason, it is of interest that the schools are becoming aware of us as potential allies. We need to develop a reciprocal awareness and attitude of friendliness. Public schools are not the enemies of early childhood programs. But if we do not make them aware of us and of what we can contribute to the overall development of the children who will pass through their programs, they will be less likely to give us support for the development of public policies that embrace young children and their families. If we want to move out of the domain of "pathology," which is where we started, an alliance with education may be the most helpful linkage that we can establish. And that does not mean capitulating or surrendering to education. It means exerting influence and sharing public resources.

2. We need to identify uniquely positive experiences that could conceivably be associated with child care. Do you not get sick of reading articles about child care which report, with some amazement, that the experience did not harm the participating children. I do! In general, it seems to me that child care research has for years been forced to do something that research design experts tell us cannot be done--prove the null hypothesis! Prove that you do not harm the children; glorify the absence of significant differences. Prove that attachment is not weakened, that learning does not show a decline, etc. But is it possible that there are areas we have overlooked in which we could postulate a directional hypothesis, that is, one in which children participating in quality child care would be predicted to show a developmental advantage?

I can think of several, but to illustrate my point I shall mention only one--the area of social development. If you were to have asked the intellectual leaders of three decades ago to mention an area in which children who participated in creative early childhood programs would show an advantage over their age mates, they would have replied, with no latency of response, "Social development."

There is a fairly rich research literature dealing with the effects of group experience on social and emotional development, some of which was recently summarized by Honig (1982). And there is also a wealth of data from naturalistic and experimental studies of animal behavior to warrant our attention to this issue. Let me cite just one example--and I mention it only because it represents animal research that has profoundly influenced some of our ideas about how human children should be reared. I am referring to the famous studies by Harry Harlow and his associates (see Harlow and Harlow, 1966) dealing with the effects of modifying early rearing conditions by separating infant monkeys from their natural mothers and raising them on what he called either "wire" or "cloth" mothers. You will recall that the cloth mothers were infinitely more effective "mothers" to the infants because of their provision of what Harlow called contact comfort. How many of us have used those studies to support the importance of holding, touching, and cuddling the infants we care for?

But how many remember--or even refer to--some equally tantalizing findings by the same research group which dealt with what he called the peer-affectional system. Infant monkeys separated from their mothers (or raised by mothers who had themselves had inadequate mothering as infants) could be rehabilitated if they were given daily play sessions with peers. In fact, I once heard Dr. Harlow say in a lecture that a Rhesus monkey could grow up to be "normal" if it had a

lousy mother but an opportunity for play with peers, but not vice versa. My point here is that we have been very selective in highlighting different aspects of those famous research findings. The terms "wire mother" and "cloth mother" have become parlor conversational terms. But do you ever hear anyone bring up the "peer affectional system"? We need to comb through the research literature--and our own daily experience--for areas in which there might well be a clear and important developmental advantage associated with participation in a quality early childhood program and accumulate more information about those areas. Many of the children in our child care programs experience turbulent family situations. Does participation in quality child care help these children adjust to family instability and conflict? Does such experience enable children to take the role of the other at an earlier age? Can participation in early social groups lead to more altruism and cooperation in children, to more comfortable acceptance of people of different racial and ethnic groups? Does it help them develop an orientation toward peace? Child care programs provide a rich field setting for the investigation of such issues. Information resulting from such investigations would be of immeasurable value to us as we develop our public information campaign about the importance of and effectiveness of quality child care.

3. We need a major commitment to research on both the processes and products of child care programs. This, my last major point, builds from the previous one and from the "What Is?" part of my question. It will sound like the standard academic benediction--we need more research, amen. But, to be sure, we do. The tremendous upsurge of child care research in the past decade has been only a beginning. Much of it has dealt with very similar questions: the effects of early day care on attachment, cognitive gains or losses associated with child care experience, etc. Often the studies have used similar and

inadequate methodology. Control groups, if identified at all, have often been sloppily aggregated, and some of the researchers have displayed amazing naivete about child care. For example, one which I will not identify included as controls in a study purporting to contrast "home-reared" and "day care" children (a false dichotomy to begin with) - several children were in family day care and one in a foster home! How is that for a control group! Furthermore, much of our research has lacked what Bronfenbrenner (1979) calls ecological validity--that is, procedures are carried out in laboratory settings that bear little if any resemblance to real-life situations. The best example of this is the large amount of research concerned with day care and attachment. Many of these studies have used what is called the Strange Situation test (see Ainsworth and Wittig, 1969). This procedure was designed for children of a different age group and is carried out in an alien type of laboratory situation that is generally quite anxiety-producing for young children. Studies which have looked at attachment in more ecologically relevant settings (e.g., observing the separation reactions of young children in actual child care settings) do not find anxious and ambivalent attachments (Blanchard and Main, 1979).

But, in addition to these methodological problems, much of our research has been concerned with what we call products or outcomes instead of the processes involved. We still know precious little about what actually takes place in quality child care--or child care that does not represent quality by our definitions--except as can be deduced from a supposed "daily program" filed with a licensing agency. We desperately need more research of this nature.

A final flaw in our child care research structure is that most of it has been conducted in the highly visible and carefully monitored demonstration projects--programs that are often cited as a means of trying to define quality. We still know precious little about what actually goes on in the "out there"

programs, and we cannot generalize about findings until such programs have also been included in our universe of research studies. It is difficult to do research on programs that do not want to be involved--or on programs that we cannot even find. But, if the child care system is to be accepted as an important influence on the developmental careers of children, it is essential that we know what goes on in such programs (process) and what some of the associated consequences (products) are.

Summary

At this meeting, many different people, with different concerns and points of view, have presented partial answers to the question, "What is Quality Child Care?" During this final session of the conference, I have grafted my own answer on to those formulated earlier. Like a high school English teacher, I broke the question down into its components and asked you to think about each part with me. In doing so, we explored successively the meaning of child care, the definition of quality, the present realities that characterize the field, and future possibilities. Then, as a means of helping to put things back together, I made a number of suggestions which I hope members of NAEYC will consider useful as they carry out their own individual initiatives oriented toward defining, achieving, and improving quality child care.

One characteristic of living organisms is that they grow. And a living organization must also grow. In that respect, NAEYC is like a living organism. We experience growth and development just as do the children we care for. Our organization used to be small, and now we are large. We used to be timid, and now we are becoming bolder. We used to be quiet, but now we speak with a loud voice. We used to have a poor self-concept, and now we are becoming proud and confident. We used to be apologetic about the kinds of service we provided to children and families, and now we are reminding people that we provide one of the most vital services possible in any society--the care and nurture and education of the young, who represent the future of the society. We used to be misunderstood and poorly represented in the press and the media, but we are beginning to receive fairer treatment as the general public comes to need us and use us more and thereby to understand who and what we are and what we do. We used to be poor, and we are still poor. But we are upwardly mobile! And

we are moving fast--and in the right directions. We are even changing some of the words we used and the meanings of some of the old terms in order to have people understand and appreciate the role we play in the lives of children and families and in the arena of public policy.

And we are proud of these changes, because living things grow. But growth means change, and sometimes change means discomfort and pain as the new growth is assimilated. But unless we grow, we are not alive. I thank all of you for helping us to grow, and for helping me during my brief time in the nucleus of this growth system. And I look forward to continuing to grow and develop with all of you as we help this organization play a leading role in ensuring that the children of this country--and indeed of the whole world--have available to them quality environments in which to grow.

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